

**CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES
ADMINISTRATIVE MEMO #2-2009**

To: Service Area Administrators
Children and Family Services Administrators, Supervisors, and Staff

From: Todd L. Reckling, Policy Section Administrator
Division of Children and Family Services *Todd L. Reckling*

Approved by: Todd A. Landry, Director
Division of Children and Family Services *Todd A. Landry*

Date: January 30, 2009

Contact Person: Rachel West, Program Specialist 402-471-8470

Regarding: Calculating Mileage for the Transportation of State Wards

Effective Date: Immediately

Duration: Until revised

Purpose: Standardize the calculation of mileage

Introduction and Background:

In September 2007, the Legislative Performance Audit Section conducted an audit of the Department of Health and Human Services' transportation contracts for state wards to determine 1) if the Department is compliant with state statutes outlining such contracts, and 2) to identify the mechanisms the Department uses to ensure to ensure contract compliance. The audit revealed that the Department has in place an internal mechanism to limit the costs of reimbursing transportation providers by pre-authorizing the number of miles for which it will reimburse providers. However, there is no written Department policy or standard for calculating such mileage. This administrative memo will meet this need.

Process:

Division of Children and Family Services staff will use various Internet mapping applications, such as MapQuest, Yahoo! Maps, and Google Maps, to calculate the number of miles they will authorize for reimbursement.

MapQuest offers maps, driving directions (with mileage and driving time estimates), and business directory information. Users can research routes by specifying a start and end point, selecting multiple points or driving destinations, choosing routes with the shortest distance or shortest driving time, avoiding certain roads (for example, highways or toll roads), and reversing driving directions. Staff can access the application on personal computers, cell phones, and other wireless devices at <http://www.mapquest.com/beta>. The Department has also bookmarked the application on its employee Intranet system at <http://www2.dhhs.ne.gov/>.

Yahoo! Maps offers features similar to those of MapQuest. While it does not allow users to specify preferred routes or routes they would like to avoid, it does allow users to modify suggested routes using a click and drag function on the map itself. Yahoo! Maps also allows users to view live traffic conditions for

a particular route and to send routes to email accounts and wireless phones. Staff can access Yahoo!Maps on personal computers, cell phones, and other wireless devices at <http://maps.yahoo.com/>.

Other Internet mapping applications that staff can use to calculate the number of miles they will authorize for reimbursement include Google Maps (<http://maps.google.com/>), Randy McNally maps (<http://www.randmcnally.com/rmc/directions/dirMapsDirections.jsp?cmtty=0>), MSN maps and directions (<http://maps.live.com/>), or similar applications; all accessible on personal computers, cell phones, and other wireless devices.

When using any Internet mapping applications, staff must enter the precise start and end points of a trip. Staff will print the final route sheet from the selected internet mapping application and place it in the client file. Staff will utilize the calculation of miles in authorizing mileage for the client and provider.

We recognize that on occasion a provider may need to veer from the route or make an unplanned, but necessary stop. If this occurs and the provider requests additional miles be paid, Department staff will ask the provider to submit a written request for an increase in the number of miles traveled which includes an explanation of why additional mileage is being billed. Department staff will then determine if the additional travel meets Department guidelines and/or the explanation and additional mileage are reasonable. If Department staff determine that additional miles should be approved, the worker shall update the service authorization to add in the additional miles.

The Department will not reimburse providers for any mileage above the amount staff authorize for transportation service without a written request from the provider and documented Department approval.